

1 April 2010

## **PolyU Takes On Community Development in Kaiping through Tourism and Hospitality**

As part of its 30th anniversary celebrations, the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) established a community programme with industry partners entitled “Community Development through Tourism and Hospitality”. Having assessed various communities in terms of their needs for tourism and hospitality development, the School opted for Kaiping, a small community in the Pearl River Delta.

Kaiping is unique in that the area is famous for its “diaolous”, which are unusual 3 to 5 storey houses built in the early part of the twentieth century. Since 2007, the Kaiping diaolou clusters have been included on the World Cultural Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

As partners in the SHTM programme, the Kaiping Tourism Bureau and the Guangdong Kaiping Diaolou Development Company pledged their support to the School in furthering the development of the community’s tourism and hospitality industry. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Kaiping on 15 March by Professor Kaye CHON, Chair Professor and Director of SHTM, Mr XU Yong Feng, Director of Kaiping Tourism Bureau, and Mr KUANG Ji Kang, General Manager of Guangdong Kaiping Diaolou Tourism Development Company. At a ceremony that followed, a plaque commemorating the occasion was unveiled.

Addressing the ceremony, Professor Kaye CHON said, “The School believes that everyone involved in the tourism and hospitality industry can contribute to the well-being of the destinations in which they operate to ensure success and sustainability. With this in mind, we would like to contribute to this meaningful cause by offering tailor-made courses to the villagers in Kaiping to help them in their pursuits.”

In the two weeks that followed, SHTM faculty members were in Kaiping to provide training to local villagers who wanted to establish businesses in tourism and hospitality. The topics of the training sessions included:

- World Tourism Trends and UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Community-based Tourism
- Food Hygiene and Safety
- Menu Design
- Service Quality Management
- Cultural Tourism: Concepts and Markets
- Cultural Tourism: Product Development

- Bed and Breakfast
- Attraction Management
- Food and Culture

“We are very appreciative of the initiative undertaken by PolyU’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management and the selfless efforts of its staff,” Mr KUANG Ji Kang remarked. “It is a known fact that SHTM’s faculty members come from all around the globe. Courses tailor made and conducted by such a respected team of international professionals will not only broaden the horizons of villagers but will also help to raise the overall industry standard in Kaiping,” he said.

As Professor CHON rightly put it, “It is only the beginning of a meaningful collaboration.”

PolyU’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management is one of the world-leading providers of hospitality and tourism education. It is ranked No. 2 in the world among hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* in November 2009.

With 60 academic staff drawing from 18 countries, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from PhD to Higher Diploma. It was awarded the 2003 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Institutional Achievement Award in recognition of its significant contribution to tourism education, and is designated by United Nations World Tourism Organisation as one of its global Education and Training Centres.



*Signing of Memorandum of Understanding: (from left) Mr XU Yong Feng of Kaiping Tourism Bureau, Prof Kaye CHON of SHTM and Mr KUANG Ji Kang of Guangdong Kaiping Diaolou Tourism Development Company*



*A plaque unveiled to commemorate the meaningful collaboration*



*Prof Bob McKercher of SHTM delivered two lectures entitled "Cultural Tourism: Concepts and Markets" and "Cultural Tourism: Product Development"*

\*\*\*\*\*

Press contact : Ms Pauline Ngan, Marketing Manager  
School of Hotel and Tourism Management

Telephone : +852 3400-2634

E-mail : [hmpn@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:hmpn@polyu.edu.hk)